



NATURE PAINT BRUSHES

Aunt Riva's big art show is coming up, but you need a paint brush to paint your nature-y masterpiece! What would Nature Cat do in this situation? He'd make a paintbrush from materials found in the natural world, of course. What will you use to make your paintbrush?



LET'S MAKE NATURE PAINT BRUSHES



TIPS FOR SUCCESS



A CLOSER LOOK AT NATURE PAINT BRUSHES



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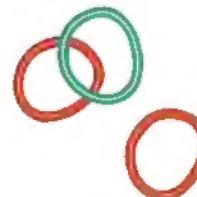
NATURE PAINT BRUSHES

DIFFICULTY: EASY

Have you ever been curious about what it would be like to paint with a dandelion or a fern? What about blades of grass? Let's find out!

MATERIALS

- Twine/string or rubber bands
- Safety scissors
- Sticks (about five to six inches long)
- Non-toxic paint + container for holding paint
- Construction paper
- Natural materials for brushes, such as:



Small bundle of grass (about three to four inches long)



Dandelions (flower plus about three to four inches of stem)



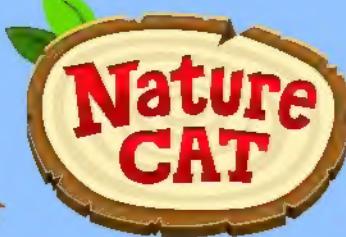
Needles from pine, spruce, fir or cedar with at least one inch of the stem or branch



A small leaf



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LET'S MAKE NATURE-IFFIC PAINT BRUSHES!

- 1 With your scissors, head outside to find materials for brushes. Try one of the suggestions above or choose something else you think might work. Pick up sticks, too. These will be the handles for your paintbrushes. If you are looking in a public place, check the rules before you take from live plants, such as picking flowers.
- 2 Divide your materials into two piles. One for the sticks and one for the brush heads.
- 3 If you are using blades of grass, wrap twine or a rubber band around the bundle to hold it together. Leave about an inch of grass below the wrapped twine or band so you can attach the stick to it.
- 4 Place a brush head next to the top of a stick. Make sure the stem of the brush overlaps with the stick by at least an inch. Pinch the brush and stick together with your thumb and forefinger to pick them up.
- 5 Attach the brush and stick by wrapping the twine several times around them and then tying a knot to secure them together. Trim the ends of your knot. You can also use a rubber band.
- 6 Repeat to make more brushes.
- 7 Time to paint!



STEP 3



STEP 4



STEP 6



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TIPS FOR SUCCESS



Have a friend or parent hold the brush and stick together, while you wrap the twine or rubber band.



For plants with soft stems, such as the dandelion, attach the stick as close to the flower as you can. This will keep your brush head from being too floppy.



Don't be afraid to try all different kinds of nature materials!



When you are finished with your paint brushes, don't throw them in the trash. Rinse the paint off and take them apart. The sticks and brush heads can go in the compost or back outside.

A CLOSER LOOK

Make marks using each of your different paint brushes on a piece of paper. Try pressing and dragging the brushes for different effects. Compare the marks you have made. Which of your brush heads worked best?



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